

UDAF Marketing And Conservation Promotes Utah Beef And Genetics To Argentina Cattle Buyers

Cattle buyers from the South American nation of Argentina spent three days in Utah recently shopping for high-value livestock genetics to help improve the quality of beef in their country. The shopping trip was arranged and hosted by Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, Marketing and Conservation Director, Randy Parker, under the federal Market Access Program. The program helps states expand their export markets by bringing together local agricultural producers and product buyers from around the world.

In this case, two representatives of the Argentinean cattle industry were shopping for animals in Utah that had similar genetic traits as those of the popular cattle breeds in Argentina, the Angus and Hereford breeds. Sixty percent of the cattle in Argentina are Angus, 40 percent are Hereford. Agriculture makes up 70 percent of that country's economy.

The Argentinean visitors were Luis Etchevehere, the director of Argentina's Rural Society and Luciano Miguens, a livestock veterinarian. They visited three cattle ranches as well as two other companies specializing in livestock embryo and seaman marketing. The two visited the Jensen Brothers cattle ranch in Wellsville, the Scott Reese Ranch in Morgan, and the Rod Curtis Ranch of Logan. They also visited Hoffman Artificial Insemination Service in Logan, and Quail Creek Ranches of La Verkin.

Etchevehere and Miguens were looking for mid-sized cattle that are able to mature on pasture feed, since most cattle in Argentina are not finished on expensive grain in feedlots. Several breeds in Utah meet that requirement.

Etchevehere and Miguens said they were impressed with the genetic quality of cattle in Utah. They were specifically looking for strong legs and feet, good rib cage in females, and good mothering instincts.

They were also impressed with the quality of people they met. They were impressed with the ranchers' commitment to their animals' health and with their family values.

"This helps build business relationships," said Marketing Director, Randy Parker. "Our visitors wanted to

know whether Utah ranchers are in this for the long-term, and the answer is yes. They felt comfortable with the values here in Utah, and they felt like we were people they could trust," he added.

Etchevehere and Miguens also visited ranches in Montana and Wyoming before heading home to Argentina.

The hope is that an ongoing relationship is developed where cattle genetics is shared between the two countries. The exchange of certain genes helps add vigor to a breed and strengthens the animals.

Such a relationship of sharing favored genetic traits could also benefit Utah cattle as well.



(top) Argentinean cattle buyers inspect animals and talk with Joe Jensen of Jensen Brothers cattle ranch.

(bottom) Marketing Director, Randy Parker (left) introduces Argentinean cattle buyers to Gail and Joe Jensen (right) during recent trade mission sponsored by UDAF.

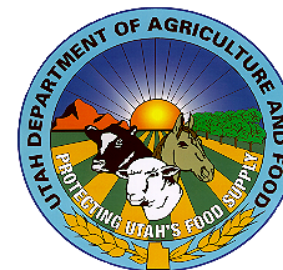
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Box Elder County Cattle Ranchers Greet First Shipment Of NDM

The first of more than 350 semi-truck loads of powdered milk are being distributed to drought-plagued cattle ranchers in Northern Utah. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has allocated nearly 16 million pounds of Non-fat Dry Milk (NDM) to Utah cattle, buffalo, sheep, and goat ranchers as part of a ten-state drought relief effort. The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) is administering the program and coordinating the distribution of the product. The NDM is a high-protein feed supplement that is intended to offset some of the effects the drought is having on livestock.

"I am pleased to see that the powdered milk is now in the hands of those who need it the most, our livestock producers," said Commissioner of Agriculture and Food, Cary G. Peterson. "The efforts of many individuals are now paying off with these deliveries that are scheduled to bring the product to ranchers in every county in the state," he added.

According to the USDA, all 29 counties in Utah are experiencing severe or exceptional drought conditions making the state the driest in the country.

Dry conditions have rendered millions of acres of Utah range land unproductive, forcing many ranchers to sell their herds or purchase other expensive feed. Many ranchers will add the powdered milk to their traditional feed, thereby boosting its protein level. Other ranchers will trade the milk to commercial feed manufacturers in exchange for other types livestock feed.

A total of 1,428 livestock owners in Utah, representing 375,000 head of cattle, buffalo, sheep, and goats have signed up for the program.

Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture would provide surplus USDA non-fat dry milk to livestock producers in areas hardest hit by continuing drought. The powdered milk is not intended for, nor destined for human consumption. The NDM is being made available to more than 130 counties in ten states that meet eligibility criteria. The states with eligible counties are: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

Important Drought Events - 2003

April 8 -- Extreme and Exceptional drought conditions in Utah make foundation livestock owners eligible for 16 million pounds of USDA Non-fat Dry Milk (NDM).

May 8 -- USDA and county agriculture committees report crop and range land losses of \$286,000,000 in Utah.

May 14 -- Agriculture Commissioner, Cary G. Peterson, and county agriculture committees requests statewide declaration of Agricultural Disaster.

May 20 -- Governor Leavitt signs Declaration of Agriculture Disaster for Utah, seeks federal disaster designation.

June 27 -- USDA Secretary Ann M. Veneman declares Utah a Primary Natural Disaster Area.

July 11 -- Utah begins receiving shipments of 16 million pounds of Non-fat Dry Milk.



Clockwise from top left: First semi load of powdered milk is unloaded in Tremonton. UDAF Deputy Commissioner Kyle Stephens (on trailer) reviews NDM paperwork with Plant Industry's Clair Allen and Box Elder county ranchers. NDM and hay mixture is fed to cattle at Sorensen Ranch in Howell Valley, Box Elder County.

USDA Designates Utah As Federal Drought Disaster Area

U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman designated the entire state of Utah a primary natural disaster area due to drought, insect infestation and high winds. The designation comes as Utah is suffering through its 5th year in a row of severe drought conditions. Water storage and stream flows in the state are approximately half of normal, and forecasted temperatures are expected to be above average with rainfall forecast to be less than normal.

The federal declaration comes several weeks following a formal request for assistance by Utah Governor Mike Leavitt on May 20th of this year.

"Utah farmers and ranchers desperately need this federal assistance," said Governor Mike Leavitt. "I have asked Commissioner of Agriculture, Cary Peterson, to help drought and insect-infested counties receive full benefit from this disaster declaration."

Utah has faced five years in a row of ever intensifying drought conditions, and is currently the driest state in the country, according to the USDA's Palmer drought index.

"I appreciate the timely action by Governor Leavitt and Secretary Veneman in making this disaster designation," said Commissioner Cary G. Peterson. "This makes some support programs and relief options available to Utah farmers and ranchers," he added.

This designation makes farm operators in all 29 Utah counties eligible to be considered for low-interest emergency loans from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), provided eligibility requirements are met.

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